

What is Claimed is:
CLAIMS

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1. A process for the realisation of painted and/or variously decorated artefacts from metal materials, ceramic materials, wood, plastics and the like, utilising the technique of the transfer of monochrome or polychrome patterns or figures reproduced on a transfer support, by means of the combined action of pressure and temperature, characterised in that it comprises the following steps:
- 10 - submitting the raw artefact to be decorated to possible operations of preparation of the surfaces, such as cleaning, degreasing, chemical and/or electrolytic conversion, and possibly to one or more preliminary painting cycles, realisable with the use
- 15 of liquid or powder paints, to avoid diffusion phenomena with the colours of the transfer support,
- performing the wrapping up or tight-covering of the artefact to be decorated, with a sublimable colour transfer support, having the form of a sheet, a
- 20 strip, a bag or an envelope, comprising a supporting base from gas-tight thermoformable plastic material, the pattern or decoration to be transferred on to the artefact to be decorated being carried on said supporting base,

- creating a vacuum between said artefact and said support, so as to cause the transfer support to uniformly adhere to the surface of the artefact to be decorated,

5 - submitting the so treated artefact to a heating action at temperatures on the order of 200-230°C, for a time of from about 30 seconds to 30 minutes, to perform the transfer and the polymerisation of the final colours from the transfer support to the
10 artefact,

- removing, after the cooling and possibly after the handling and/or the installation of the decorated artefact, said exhausted supporting base from the decorated surface of the artefact.

15 2. The process according to claim 1, characterised in that said supporting base from gas-tight thermoformable plastic material is constituted by polyvinyl alcohol.

3. The process according to claim 1, characterised in
20 that said artefact wrapped up or covered with said sublimable colour transfer support adhering by effect of the vacuum to the surface to be decorated, is submitted to a first intermediate heating action at a temperature at which the thermoforming occurs, i.e.

5. An apparatus for the realisation of the process to
decorate artefacts according to the ~~process of claims~~
~~1 and 2~~, characterised in that it comprises:

- a device to create a vacuum between said transfer support and the artefact to be decorated, so that said support adheres and exercises a pressure on said wrapped up artefact;

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[illegible]